

1 April 2017

1) The Union Government on 31 March 2017 lowered the interest rates on small saving schemes by how much percent? – **0.1%**

Explanation: The Union Government on 31 March 2017 lowered the interest rates on small saving schemes such as the Public Provident Fund (PPF), Kisan Vikas Patra and the Sukanya Samriddhi scheme by 0.1 per cent for the April-June 2017 quarter.

– Now investments in the PPF scheme will fetch a lower annual rate of 7.9%, the same as 5-year National Savings Certificate (NSC). The existing rate for these two schemes is 8%. Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) investments will yield 7.6% and mature in 112 months.

– The one for the girl child savings, the Sukanya Samriddhi Account Scheme, will offer 8.4% annually, from 8.5% at present, while it will be the same at 8.4% for the 5-year Senior Citizens Savings Scheme.

– Term deposits of 1-5 years will fetch a lower 6.9-7.7% that will be paid quarterly while the 5-year recurring deposit has been pegged lower at 7.2%.

2) India's first-ever bus running on cow-dung biogas was launched in which city on 31 March 2017? – **Kolkata**

Explanation: A Kolkata-based company, Phoenix India Research and Development Group, claimed to have launched India's first-ever bus running on cow-dung biogas. The company has tied up with heavy vehicle major Ashok Leyland to manufacture the 54-seater bus at a cost of Rs 13 lakh approximately.

– The first-such bus was launched on 31 March 2017 and will run between Ultadanga in the north and Garia in south Kolkata. At just Re. 1 for the 17.5 km stretch, the bus will be the cheapest mode of transport for a passenger in the country.

– The company claimed to produce biogas principally from cow dung in its plant in Birbhum district. The fuel is transported to Kolkata in tankers.

– Biogas is produced from animal and plant waste and principally consists of methane. It is a non-toxic colourless flammable gas that can be used as fuel for vehicles, cooking and generating electricity. It is also a clean source of fuel and environment-friendly.

3) During March 2017 a unique initiative to unearth budding footballers was launched in Kerala jointly by the FIFA and the All India Football Federation (AIFF). What is the name given to this initiative? – **"Mission 11 Million"**

Explanation: The 'Mission 11 Million' is the name of the unique initiative by global football governing body FIFA and the All India Football Federation (AIFF) to unearth budding footballers and further popularise the game among the students in India. It was launched with much fanfare in Kochi (Kerala) on 29 March 2017.

– The programme follows FIFA's choice of Kochi as a venue for the upcoming FIFA Under-17 World Cup.

– As per the initiative, those studying in Class V and above would be selected. The initiative is would reach out to nearly 15,000 schools across country and around one crore students would take part in it.

4) US private space company SpaceX on 30 March 2017 achieved which milestone with the launch of the Falcon 9 rocket? – **It successfully launched its first recycled rocket**

Explanation: Entrepreneur Elon Musk-led SpaceX launched its first recycled rocket on 30 March 2017 in the form of Falcon 9, which was the biggest leap yet in its bid to drive down costs and speed up flights.

– The rocket was launched from Florida's Kennedy Space Center hoisting a broadcasting satellite into the orbit.

– The rocket used in this flight had been landed on an ocean platform almost exactly a year ago after a space station

launch for NASA with SpaceX refurbishing and testing the 15-foot booster.

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2-3 April 2017

1) Which 6 banking entities of India became history on 1 April 2017 as they were merged with State Bank of India?

– **State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur (SBBJ), State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH), State Bank of Mysore (SBM), State Bank of Patiala (SBP), State Bank of Travancore (SBT) and Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB)**

Explanation: Five associate banks of SBI – State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur (SBBJ), State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH), State Bank of Mysore (SBM), State Bank of Patiala (SBP) and State Bank of Travancore (SBT), besides Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB) became part of the State Bank of India (SBI) on 1 April 2017. This merger catapulted SBI to among the top 50 banks in the world.

– With this six-way mega merger, the merged entity (SBI) will have a deposit base of more than Rs. 26 lakh crore and advances level of Rs. 18.50 lakh crore. It will have a total customer base of 37 crore with a branch network of around 24,000 and nearly 59,000 ATMs across the country.

– The government had in February 2017 approved the merger of these five associate banks with SBI. Later in March 2017, the Cabinet approved merger of BMB as well.

– SBI first merged State Bank of Saurashtra with itself in 2008. Two years later, State Bank of Indore was merged with it.

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2) What is the length of the Chenani-Nashri Tunnel – India’s longest road tunnel that links Kashmir Valley with Jammu and which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 2 April 2017? – **9.28 km**

Explanation: The 9.28 km long Chenani-Nashri Tunnel that reduced the distance

between Jammu and Srinagar by 30 km, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 2 April 2017.

– The tunnel, also known as ‘Patnitop Tunnel’, bypasses Patnitop, Kud, and Batote and will thus reduce traffic jams on NH 44 in winter. According to the Union Govt., the estimated value of daily fuel savings will be to the tune of Rs. 27 lakh.

– The work on the tunnel was started on 23 May 2011. The main tunnel is 13 metres in diameter, while the parallel escape tunnel is 6 metres diameter.

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3) What is the name of the scheme for providing physical aids and assisted-living devices for senior citizens belonging to BPL category that was launched in Andhra Pradesh’s Nellore district on 1 April 2017? – **“Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana”**

Explanation: “Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana” was launched by the Ministry for Social Justice and Empowerment on 1 April 2017 at Nellore (Andhra Pradesh). Under the scheme, physical aids and assisted-living devices for senior citizens were distributed to senior citizens belonging to below poverty line (BPL) category.

– The scheme has been implemented through the sole implementing agency – Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO), a public sector undertaking. The aids to be distributed under the “Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana” scheme include walking sticks, elbow crutches, walkers, tripods / quadpods, hearing aids, artificial dentures and spectacles.

– The ambitious scheme, first of its kind in the country, is expected to benefit 5,20,000 Senior citizens over a period of the 3 years.

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4) P.V. Sindhu defeated which player in the finals to win her maiden India Open Super Series title on 2 April 2017? – **Carolina Marin (Spain)**

Explanation: India’s P.V. Sindhu avenged her Rio Olympic final defeat to Spain’s Carolina Marin in an emphatic style with a

straight game 21-19, 21-16 win in the women's singles final of India Open Super Series at a packed Siri Fort Sports Complex on 2 April 2017.

– It is worth mentioning that Sindhu had lost to Marin the Rio Olympic women's singles final. But she avenged her Olympic final defeat to Marin in an imperious fashion with a straight game. This was Sindhu's first India Open Super Series title.

– Earlier Viktor Axelsen (Denmark) defeated Chinese Taipei's Chou Tien-Chen in men's singles title by almost humiliating him by 21-13, 21-10 to win his first India Open Super Series.

– Axelsen's victory was special because he had reached the tournament's final in last two editions but failed to win the match. Two years ago he had lost to the home-boy Kidambi Srikanth and in the 2016 edition Japan's Kento Momota got the better of him.

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5) Around 250 people were killed in a huge mudslide in which Latin American country on 1 April 2017? – **Colombia**

Explanation: Around 250 people were killed when a giant wall of water carrying tons of mud and debris surged through Mocoa- a city in southwest Colombia in the early hours on 1 April 2017 after heavy rains caused a nearby river to overflow.

– Many of the residents of Mocoa, a city of about 350,000 near the border with Ecuador, were sleeping when the wave swept through town just after midnight. Houses were buried under feet of mud.

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4-5 April 2017

1) Which important achievement has been made in India in the field of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) recently, as disclosed by data released during April 2017? – **For the first time since 1991 FDI flow into India has taken care of current account deficit (CAD)**

Explanation: The deficit funding, which had historically been done through borrowings by companies in the overseas markets or remittances by non-resident Indians (NRIs) and portfolio inflows, is undergoing a shift in the country.

– Gross FDI from April 2016 to January 2017, the first 10 months of the fiscal year that just ended, had totaled \$53.3 billion, compared with \$47.2 billion in the same period a year earlier and \$55.6 billion in the entire fiscal 2016.

– Thus, for the first time since the opening up of the economy in 1991, India's current account deficit (CAD) – the excess of imports over exports – is being funded by Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). This is being seen as an important achievement and is a sign of rising confidence among long-term investors in Union Govt.'s ability to strengthen the country's economic foundation for sustained growth.

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2) According to media reports of 3 April 2017, the RBI is likely to start the process of printing the currency note of which new denomination? – **Rs. 200**

Explanation: The board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cleared a proposal to introduce banknotes of Rs. 200 denomination. This was disclosed in a section of reports in media on 3 April 2017. The process of printing the new Rs. 200 notes is likely to begin after June 2017, once the government officially approves this new denomination.

– The move to introduce lower denomination notes comes against the backdrop of the government's move to rework the currency mix after the demonetization of Rs. 500 and Rs. 1,000 currency notes during November 2016.

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3) Kishori Amonkar, who passed away on 3 April 2017, was an iconic personality associated with which field? – **Hindustani classical music**

Explanation: Kishori Amonkar was the foremost Hindustani classical vocalist of present era. She passed away at the age of 84 in Mumbai on 3 April 2017.

– Amonkar was recognised as one of the foremost singers in the Hindustani tradition and as an innovative exponent of the Jaipur gharana. Her mother was the well-known vocalist Mogubai Kurdikar, who trained under Alladiya Khan Saheb, the doyen of the Jaipur gharana.

– She was known primarily for her skillful singing of classical khayal songs set in the traditional ragas of Hindustani music, but also performed the lighter classical thumri repertoire, bhajan and devotional songs.

– In recognition of her contribution to the arts, she received many awards, including the Padma Bhushan (1987) and Padma Vibhushan (2002), two of India's top civilian honours.

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4) Which institute topped in the top 100 university NIRF ranking that was released by the Union Ministry Human Resource Development (MHRD) on 3 April 2017? – Indian Institute of Science (IISc)

Explanation: The Bengaluru-based Indian Institute of Science (IISc) bagged the top position in the top 100 university ranking. The ranking prepared by National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was released by the HRD Ministry on 3 April 2017. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras came in a close second while IIT Bombay took third spot.

– Delhi-based Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), which was at third position in the last ranking, has been ranked second this year in 'Universities' category.

Top 10 institutions in the list

1. Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru
2. Indian Institute of Technology, Madras

3. Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay

4. Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur

5. Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi

6. Jawaharlal Nehru University

7. Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

8. Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati

9. Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee

10. Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi

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5) Which Russian city was site of huge explosion in a metro rail station on 3 April 2017 that resulted in the death of 14 people?

– **St. Petersburg**

Explanation: The metro system of Russia's St. Petersburg city was hit by a terrorist attack on 3 April 2017 that was executed by detonating an explosive device. The explosion took place between Sennaya Ploshchad and Tekhnologicheskoye metro stations. The explosive device was contained in a briefcase and the bomb was detonated on the third car of a metro train going through a tunnel between the two stations.

– This was the first terrorist attack in the history of the St. Petersburg Metro system. Nine people were initially reported to have died, and five more died later from their injuries, bringing the total to 14.

– Later on 4 April 2017 the suspected perpetrator was named as Akbarzhan Jalilov, a Russian citizen born in Kyrgyzstan.

6 April 2017

1) Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), the flagship scheme of Govt. of India to provide LPG connections to Below Poverty Line (BPL) households, achieved which

milestone mark recently? – **The number of beneficiaries crossed 2 crore mark**

Explanation: The total beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) crossed 2 crore (20 million) mark recently. The stated objective of the scheme is to provide 5 crore (50 million) LPG connections to women from families below the poverty line by year 2019.

– The scheme was launched on 1 May 2016 from Ballia Uttar Pradesh. The scheme was carried out in a well-planned manner and that has accounted for its success. LPG distributors were first asked to get rid of duplicate accounts. The Prime Minister had then launched the #GiveItUp campaign urging people to leave the subsidy if they can afford to pay the full price.

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2) During March 2017 Google's Android operating system achieved which major landmark, as was disclosed on 4 April 2017? – Android became more popular than Windows for the first time

Explanation: According to data released by global internet traffic monitoring agency Stat Counter on 4 April 2017, Google's Android has topped Microsoft's Windows as the world's dominant computing platform in March 2017. It overtook Windows in terms of number of people using it to browse the internet.

– During March 2017, Android boasted a 37.93% market share compared with Windows' 37.91%.

– This is, thus, the first time ever that Android has become more popular than PC giant Microsoft's Windows for the first time since the 1980s when Windows was launched. It marks the end of Microsoft's leadership worldwide of the operating system market.

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3) Which global city is poised to become first major world city to have an ultra-low emission zone to tackle rising levels of air pollution, as announced on 5 April 2017? – London

Explanation: On 5 April 2017 London became the first city in the world to announce an ultra-low emission zone to tackle rising levels of air pollution, under which the drivers of the most polluting cars will have to pay an extra charge.

– London mayor Sadiq Khan on 5 April announced that from 8 April 2017 the new zone will be launched, when most polluting cars, vans and motorbikes will have to pay 12.50 pounds to drive through central London, while buses, coaches and HGVs will pay 100 pounds. London's authorities feel that the move will result in a 50% drop in emissions by 2020.

– The number of diesel cars in the city has risen despite tests finding they are damaging to public health.

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4) Who took over as the third full-time member of SEBI on 5 April 2017? – Madhabi Puri Buch

Explanation: Madhabi Puri Buch took charge as whole time member of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) – India's market regulator on 5 April 2017 for a tenure of three years. She will handle the market regulation department, market intermediaries' regulation and supervision department and integrated surveillance department among others.

– Prior to this assignment, Buch served as consultant to the New Development Bank (NDB) in Shanghai, China.

– She is the third full-time member of SEBI, other two full-time members being Gurumoorthy Mahalingam and Rajeev Kumar Agarwal. While the Board is headed by Ajay Tyagi, other members include Shakti Kanta Das (Economic affairs Secretary), V. K. Jairath Magya and RBI Deputy Governor V Acharya.

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7 April 2017

1) The Union government on 5 April 2017 approved setting up of an independent regulator to recommend passenger and freight fares and set service level benchmarks for Indian Railways. What is the name of this proposed entity? – **Rail Development Authority (RDA)**

Explanation: The Rail Development Authority (RDA) will be established as an independent regulatory body in New Delhi. It will have an initial corpus of Rs. 50 crore, will have a Chairman along with three members with a fixed term of five years and it can engage experts from relevant areas.

– RDA will act within parameters of Railway Act, 1989 and undertake the following broad functions: tariff determination, ensuring fair play and level playing field for stakeholder investment in Railways, setting efficiency and performance standards, dissemination of information. It will only be a recommendatory body and the final decisions on setting fares will be made by the Railway Ministry.

– The Chairman of RDA can be from the private sector and will be selected by a committee chaired by the Cabinet Secretary

2) The Reserve Bank of India on 6 April 2017 kept the key policy rate or the repo rate unchanged at 6.25% in the first bimonthly policy review of 2017-18. Which is the only rate in which a change was carried out in the policy review? – **Reverse Repo Rate (RRR)**

Explanation: All the six members of Reserve Bank of India's (RBI)'s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted in favour of the decision to hold the rate. The Reverse Repo Rate (RRR), however, has been raised by 25 basis points to 6%. RRR is the rate that sucks out excess liquidity from the system.

– The hike in the reverse repo comes as a surprise as most economists had also expected RBI to introduce a Standing Deposit

Facility (SDF) to help drain surplus cash from the system.

– The RBI maintained the growth forecast for FY18 at 7.4% while it pared its forecast for FY16-17 at 6.7% compared to 6.9% in the February policy review.

3) According to the announcement made by the RBI during April 2017, fund transfer via NEFT or National Electronic Funds Transfer is set to get faster. For making this possible, fund transfer will happen in batches of how much duration? – **30 minutes**

Explanation: Fund transfer via National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) is presently done in hourly batches. To make the process faster the fund transfer will now happen in batches of 30-minute intervals.

– NEFT is an electronic payment system that allows individuals to transfer funds between banks. This fund transfer system is maintained by the RBI.

– Fund transfer under NEFT is settled in batches as opposed to the real-time settlement process in RTGS or Real-Time Gross Settlement Systems, which is also an fund transfer system maintained by the RBI.

4) Which landmark anniversary of the purchase of Alaska by the United States from the Russian Empire was observed recently? – **150th**

Explanation: Alaska, the 49th state of the United States, was acquired by the country from the Russian Empire on 20 March 1867 for 7.2 million dollars, at a price of approximately two cents per acre.

– The area went through several administrative changes before becoming organized as a territory on 11 May 1912. It was admitted as the 49th state of the U.S. on 3 January 1959.

– Now Alaska is the largest state in the United States by area, the 3rd least populous and the least densely populated of the 50 United States. However, Alaska is one of the

richest US states thanks to its abundance of natural resources, such as petroleum, gold and fish, as well as its vast expanse of many tourist locations.

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8-10 April 2017

1) Two church establishments in which country were hit by suicide bombings on 9 April 2017 resulting in the death of at least 45 people? – **Egypt**

Explanation: On 9 April 2017, on the occasion of Palm Sunday (the Sunday before Easter), two churches in Egypt were hit by terror attack. St. George's Church in the northern Egyptian city of Tanta and Saint Mark's Coptic Orthodox Cathedral, the principal church in Alexandria, seat of the Coptic papacy were hit by twin suicide bombings on the day.

– At least 45 people were killed and more than 136 injured. The twin-terror attack prompted anger and fear among Christians and leading to troop deployments and the declaration of a three-month state of emergency in Egypt. President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi summoned the country's Security Council as Islamic terror group ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack.

– The assault is the latest on Egypt's Christian minority that has been increasingly targeted by Islamist militants, and it is being seen as a big challenge to President Sisi.

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2) What landmark history was made in country's High Courts recently? – **Women now head the four major High Courts of India**

Explanation: With the appointment of Indira Banerjee as Chief Justice of the Madras High Courts on 31 March 2017, women Judges created history by heading the four historical High Courts, which were among the first few created in colonial India.

– Delhi HC has been headed by Justice G. Rohini since 13 April 2014. Bombay High Court is headed by Justice Manjula Chellur. She became Bombay High Court Chief Justice on 22 August last year. Calcutta HC has been headed by acting chief justice Nishita Nirmal Mhatre since 1 December 2016.

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3) What important trend in FII equity-buying was witnessed during March 2017, as disclosed by the latest data released on 8 April 2017? – **It was the highest monthly inflows in the history of India's capital markets during March 2017**

Explanation: According to data provided by Central Depository Services (India) Ltd. On 8 April 2017, foreign institutional investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs. 30,906 crore in March 2017.

– The same trend was seen in the debt market, with FII investments hitting Rs. 25,354.8 crore in March 2017. FIIs thus set a record for the highest monthly inflows in the history of India's capital markets. FIIs have never before put so much money in Indian markets in a single month, even during the bull phase.

– The main reason behind FIIs renewed interest in the country was the resounding victory of the BJP in the key State of Uttar Pradesh during March 2017.

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4) Which film was declared the Best Film at 64thNational Film Awards that were announced on 7 April 2017? – **Kaasav (Marathi)**

Explanation: Marathi film 'Kaasav' (meaning turtle) was declared the Best Film at the 64thNational Film Awards that were announced in New Delhi on 7 April 2017. The film will thus get the prestigious 'Golden Lotus' award.

– Akshay Kumar was declared Best Actor for his lead role in Hindi film 'Rustom' while Surabhi Lakshmi was adjudged Best Actress for her role in film

(‘Minnaminungu’). This is the first-ever National Award for Akshay Kumar.

– Rajesh was declared Best Director for Marathi film ‘Ventilator’. Telugu film ‘Sathamnam Bhavathi’ was declared Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment.

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5) The third bus service between Indian and Bangladesh was started on 8 April 2017 between which two destinations? – **Kolkata and Khulna**

Explanation: In a bid to bolster India-Bangladesh bilateral ties, a Kolkata-Khulna-Dhaka bus service, covering 409 km, was flagged off on 8 April 2017. This service would be available on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from Kolkata and on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from Dhaka.

– The bus service was introduced on the occasion of Bangladeshi Prime Sheikh Hasina’s official visit to India.

– This is the third such service that has been introduced and is being run by the West Bengal Transport Department on the India side and by BRTC on the Bangladesh side. The two other services are on the Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala and the Kolkata-Dhaka routes.

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6) The Tax Department during April 2017 gave banks how much more time to obtain permanent account number (PAN) or Form-60 from all account holders? – **Up to 30 June 2017**

Explanation: The tax department had in January 2017 asked banks, post offices and cooperative banks to document PAN or declaration of Form 60 received from account holders and maintaining all records for transactions under Rule 114B of Income Tax Act. Form 60 is a declaration form filed by an individual without PAN.

– Though the deadline for getting the PAN or Form 60 (if PAN is not available) by banks effectively ended on 28 February 2017, the tax department on 5 April 2017 notified the extension of the time till 30 June 2017.

11-12 April 2017

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1) Which private sector bank on 10 April 2017 earned its place in the list of India’s 10 most valuable banks for the first time ever? – **RBL Bank**

Explanation: According to the data of Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), RBL Bank Ltd. on 10 April 2017 entered the list of India’s 10 most valuable banks. With a market capitalisation of Rs. 21,508.52 crore, the bank replaced IDFC Bank Ltd in the elite club.

– RBL Bank was formerly known as Ratnakar Bank. It has 215 branches and 374 ATMs across 16 states and Union territories.

– HDFC Bank Ltd, India’s most profitable bank, is the most valuable bank in India with a market cap of Rs 3.68 trillion, followed by state-run State Bank of India (Rs2.34 trillion) and ICICI Bank Ltd (Rs1.62 trillion). Kotak Mahindra Bank is No.4, followed by Axis Bank Ltd, IndusInd Bank Ltd, Yes Bank Ltd, Bank of Baroda and Punjab National Bank.

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2) What is the name of the former Indian naval officer whose death sentence was confirmed by Pakistani Army Staff General on 10 April 2017? – **Kulbushan Jadhav**

Explanation: Pakistani authorities have claimed that former Indian naval officer Kulbushan Jadhav (alias Hussain Mubarak Patel) was arrested from Balochistan on 3 March 2016. They have alleged that he was held for espionage and sabotage activities against Pakistan.

– He was tried through Field General Court Marshall (FCGM) under Pakistan Army Act and awarded death sentence. On 10 April

2017 Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa confirmed his death sentence through FGCM.

– India has acknowledged that Jadhav is a retired Navy officer, but denied the allegation that he was in any way connected to the government. India made it clear that his execution will be perceived as assassination.

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3) The Election Commission of India (ECI) cancelled the by-election of which constituency of Tamil Nadu on 10 April 2017 following allegations of cash for votes? – R.K. Nagar

Explanation: The by-election to R.K. Nagar constituency was necessitated following the death of former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa on 5 December 2016. The by-election for this prestigious constituency was slated for 12 April 2017.

– But the Election Commission had received complaints of widespread distribution of cash and gifts. The searches of Income Tax department on 7 April 2017 allegedly revealed, in the leaked documents, that Rs. 89 crore was routed for distribution to voters in R.K. Nagar.

– In view of such vitiated atmosphere, the ECI on 10 April 2017 announced cancellation of the by-election in RK Nagar.

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4) The first rail freight service from the UK to China departed from Essex on 10 April 2017. This train, which will cover 7,500 miles long journey and pass through seven countries, is part of which ambitious initiative of China? – One Belt, One Road (OBOR)

Explanation: China has embarked on the ambitious 'One Belt, One Road' initiative under which it seeks to boost its connectivity and trade across Asia, Africa and Europe. The initiative was first proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in year 2013 and has been launched as part of China's revived

21st century Silk Road diplomacy that seeks to push it to take a bigger role in global affairs as a major global power.

– Under this initiative the first freight train from China to UK had arrived in London in January 2017. Now the reverse train from UK to China left Essex on 10 April 2017 its 17-day, 7,500-mile journey for Yiwu in, eastern China's Zhejiang province.

– This train will pass through 7 countries – France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan before arriving in Yiwu. It is carrying British goods including soft drinks, vitamins and baby products.

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5) President Pranab Mukherjee on 9 April 2017 picked up the lucky winners from the 100th draw of lots under digital payments promotion schemes at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. Which PSU bank's customer won the Rs. 1 crore top prize for undertaking a digital transaction of Rs. 1,590? – Central Bank of India

Explanation: A transaction of Rs. 1,590 bagged a Central Bank of India customer a lucky bounty of Rs. 1 crore under the Union Government's promotional scheme to popularise digital payments – Lucky Grahak Yojana.

– The second prize of Rs. 50 lakh went to a Bank of Baroda customer. A customer of Punjab National Bank is the winner of third prize of Rs. 25 lakh. All the three customers had conducted transactions using their RuPay debit cards.

– Following demonetisation of old Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes on November 9 last year, the government took a slew of measures to promote digital payments in the country. The government launched the 'Lucky Grahak Yojana' for consumers and 'Digi Dhan Vyapar Yojana' for merchants on December 25, 2016, to promote digital transactions. These schemes are being implemented by the National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI).

6) Which history was created in the US automobile history as Tesla Inc. became the most valuable US car maker on 10 April 2017? – **For the first time the most valuable US car maker is not based in Detroit**

Explanation: Silicon Valley's Tesla Inc. overtook General Motors on 10 April 2017 to become the US car maker with the largest market capitalization. Its market value of \$50.887 billion exceeded GM's by about \$1 million.

– It was thus for the first time in the era of the modern automobile that the most valuable US car maker is not based in Detroit, the traditional auto manufacturing hub of the country.

– Tesla Inc. is based in Palo Alto, California and is primarily engaged in manufacturing electric cars and Lithium-ion battery energy storage for cars.

7) What is the name of the app and web portal launched by the Union Government on 9 April 2017 that facilitates people to contribute towards family of martyrs from central paramilitary forces? – **"BharatKeVeer"**

Explanation: 'BharatKeVeer' is the name of the ambitious application and web portal that was launched by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on 9 April 2017 with the objective to enable willing donors to contribute towards the family of a brave heart who sacrificed his/her life in line of duty. The amount so donated will be credited to the account of 'Next of Kin' of those Central Armed Police Force/Central Para Military Force soldiers.

– The idea of launching such IT portal came to the mind of actor Akshay Kumar while he was watching a documentary film on terrorists, which showed how terror leaders financially support the families of the terrorist who carry out terror acts.

– This portal is technically supported by National Informatics Centre (NIC) and powered by State Bank of India (SBI). To

ensure maximum coverage, a cap of Rs. 15 lakh is imposed on donation and donors will be alerted if amount exceeds, so they can choose to divert part of the donation to another account or the corpus.

13 April 2017

1) 100th Anniversary of which important event associated with India's Freedom Movement was observed during April 2017? – **Champan Movement**

Explanation: Mahatma Gandhi's first Satyagraha was undertaken in the erstwhile undivided Champaran district in northern Bihar in April 1917 after he learned about the abuses suffered by farmers. The farmers were forced into growing indigo by British planters/estate owners.

– It was on 10 April 1917 that Mahatma Gandhi set foot in the state of Bihar for the first time. On 18 April 1917 when he appeared in Motihari Court, nearly 2000 local people accompanied him. Champaran Movement was the first of three movements during 1917-18 that marked the entry of Gandhi in Indian politics and established him in India's struggle against the British raj.

– To mark the occasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated an exhibition titled "Swachhagraha – Babu Ko Karyanjali – Ek Abhiyan, Ek Pradarshani" in New Delhi on 10 April 2017. On the other hand Bihar Government also kicked-off the year-long commemorative celebrations.

2) According to the media reports of 12 April 2017, state-owned fuel retailers have planned to implement daily revision of fuel price in five cities from 1 May 2017 ahead of a nationwide roll-out of the scheme. Which 5 cities are these? – **Pondicherry, Vishakhapatnam, Udaipur, Jamshedpur and Chandigarh**

Explanation: State refiners currently revise fuel prices every fortnight to reflect volatility

in the currency and global oil markets. Refiners have decided to implement daily revision of fuel prices across the country later this year. The scheme will, however, be first implemented in 5 cities across the country as a pilot project.

– The daily revision of fuel prices will be first implemented in Pondicherry and Vishakhapatnam in South India, Udaipur in the West, Jamshedpur in the East and Chandigarh in the North. The roll out of “daily dynamic pricing” in five cities will help them identify the problems ahead of a nationwide roll-out of the scheme later this year.

– State refiners – Indian Oil Corp, Bharat Petroleum Corp and Hindustan Petroleum Corp – operate 90% of the retail outlets in the country.

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3) What is the name of the first of its kind application launched by Union Power Minister Piyush Goyal on 12 April 2017 which empowers citizens with real time information sharing on power supply? – **“Urja Mitra”**

Explanation: ‘Urja Mitra’ is the name of a first of its kind application which provides a central platform, Web-Portal (www.urjamitra.com) as well as Mobile App (iOS version and android version) with the primary objective of empowering citizens by real time information sharing on power supply.

– Now power consumers across the nation would have prior intimation of expected duration and cause of scheduled power outages and post fault intimation of unscheduled power outages duration.

– Consumer can also view real time power outages in any part of the country, lodge a complaint on power outages in its area. Complaints can also be lodged on helpline number 1912.

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4) What is the name of India’s first-ever industrial-articulated robot that was launched

on 11 April 2017 by TAL Manufacturing Solutions? – **“BRABO”**

Explanation: TAL Manufacturing Solutions, a wholly owned subsidiary of Tata Motors, on 11 April 2017 launched India’s first industrial-articulated robot and it goes by the name “BRABO”.

– BRABO is meant to complement the human workforce and perform repetitive, high volume, dangerous and time-consuming tasks from raw material handling to packaging of finished products.

– This is the first time that an industrial robot has been conceptualised, designed and manufactured in India. It is expected to increase productivity by 15-30%, with a payback period of 15 to 18 months.

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5) Former Union Minister and former Mayor of Lucknow Akhilesh Das Gupta passed away on 12 April 2017. He was the President of which sporting association? – **Badminton Association of India (BAI)**

Explanation: Akhilesh Das Gupta was a Rajya Sabha MP for 18 years. A former badminton player, Das Gupta was the son of freedom fighter and former UP Chief Minister Babu Banarasi Das.

– He was at the helm of Badminton Association of India (BAI) from 2011. During Akhilesh das Gupta’s tenure, Saina Nehwal earned a bronze medal at the 2012 London Olympics, whereas PV Sindhu raised the profile of India badminton further, winning a silver medal at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

– Cash awards as well as exposure to the shuttlers in all age categories had become a routine for the Indian badminton ever since he took over from the then BAI chief VK Verma.

– The Central Bureau of Investigations (CBI) had recently investigated Akhilesh Das Gupta and other office bearers of the Delhi Capital Badminton Association (DCBA) on charges of nepotism in selection of a team

that went to Tokyo for the Youth Sports Exchange Program in 2014.

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14 April 2017



1) President Pranab Mukherjee on 13 April 2017 gave his approval to four supporting pieces of legislation related to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) that will pave the way for the roll out of “one nation, one tax” regime from 1 July 2017. Which bills are these? – **a) The Central GST Act, 2017 b) The Integrated GST Act, 2017 c) The GST (Compensation to States) Act, 2017 and d) The Union Territory GST Act, 2017**

Explanation: The GST, the biggest taxation reform since Independence, will subsume central excise, service tax, Value Added Tax (VAT) and other local levies to create a uniform market.

– The Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017, provides for the levy of the Central Goods and Services Tax by the Centre on the supply of goods and services within the boundary of a state.

– The Integrated GST Act deals with the levy of Integrated Goods and Services Tax by the Centre on inter-State supply of goods and services.

– The Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Act, provides for compensation to the states for the loss of revenue arising on account of implementation of the Goods and Services Tax.

– The Union Territory GST Act makes a provision for levy and collection of tax on

intra-State supply of goods, services or both by the Union Territories.

– These bills were passed in Rajya Sabha on 6 April 2017 and by Lok Sabha on 29 March 2017.

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2) The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on 12 April 2017 approved listing of 11 central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) in the equity market. What is the mandated public shareholding in profitable CPSEs, which is being adhered to by this listing? – **25%**

Explanation: Under the new disinvestment policy, unveiled in the 2016-17 union budget, CPSEs having a positive net-worth, no accumulated losses and having earned profits in three preceding consecutive years are required to achieve mandatory listing norms of 25% public holding.

– To adhere to this clause, the CCEA on 12 April 2017 approved listing of 11 CPSEs. These 11 CPSEs are – 5 railway subsidiaries – Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd, IRCON International Ltd., Indian Railway Finance Corp. Ltd., Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd. (IRCTC) and RITES Ltd.; 3 defence ministry enterprises – Bharat Dynamics Ltd., Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd. and Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd.; 2 entities under the Steel Ministry – MSTC Ltd. and Mishra Dhatu Nigam Ltd. and one unit under the power ministry – North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Ltd.

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3) The first-ever G20 Ministerial Meet on Digital Economy was held during April 2017 in which European city, in which India was represented by Ravi Shankar Prasad? – **Dusseldorf (Germany)**

Explanation: German city Dusseldorf hosted the first edition of G20 Ministerial Meet on Digital Economy on 6-7 April 2017. The title of the meet was ‘Digitalisation’ Policies for a Digital Future’.

– India was represented in the meet by Union Electronics and Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad. He shared India’s experience of carrying out various digital initiatives in the country and strengthening country’s digital infrastructure.

– The meet concluded with adaptation of declaration on ‘Shaping Digitalisation for an Interconnected World’ which primarily seeks greater availability of affordable broadband connectivity, broader adoption of digital technologies and services improved digital skills and literacy for G20 economies. G20 is the organisation of 20 major economies of the world and includes developed and emerging economies.



4) Which Japanese global conglomerate on 11 April 2017 warned that it may not be able to continue as a going concern as it is grappling with billions of dollars in losses? – **Toshiba**

Explanation: Toshiba, the 142-year-old Japanese conglomerate with its headquarters in Tokyo, had posted an operating loss of 576.3 billion yen (\$5.2 billion) for the nine months ended 31 December 2016. It had earlier missed two previous deadlines for financial results.

– The group has inflicted billions of dollars in losses from its Westinghouse Electric nuclear business, which had filed for bankruptcy in the US last month. The nuclear business write-down has pushed Toshiba’s liabilities beyond its level of assets.

– Toshiba’s inability to report earnings has also raised speculation of a possible delisting from the Tokyo Stock Exchange. The group on 11 April 2017 issued warnings that it may not be able to continue in business.

15-18 April 2017

1) Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan narrowly won a historic referendum on 16 April 2017. What will be the main implication of this result for the President? – **It will make him much powerful**

Explanation: The referendum on 16 April 2017 was held to approve some sweeping constitutional changes as to create a presidential system that will grant President Erdogan more power than any leader since modern Turkey’s founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and his successor Ismet Inonu.

– According to the data released by the Turkish Election Commission, the ‘Yes’ campaign won 51.4% of the vote against 48.6% for ‘No’ in a count based on 99.5% of the ballot boxes. Turnout was a high 85%.

– However, Turkey’s two main opposition parties said they would challenge the results over alleged violations. The referendum was held under a state of emergency that has seen 47,000 people arrested in an unprecedented crackdown after a failed military putsch against the President in July last year.

2) Which state’s Assembly on 16 April 2017 passed the Bill to enhance the reservations for Muslims from 4% to 12% for admission into educational institutions and for the State services? – **Telangana**

Explanation: The Telangana Legislature on 16 April 2017 passed the Bill enhancing the reservations for Muslims to 12% and that of Scheduled Tribes (ST) to 10% for admission into educational institutions and for the State services.

– Currently, reservation for Muslims is at 4%, while for Scheduled Tribes, it is at 6% in the state.

– The Bill, termed as historical by the ruling TRS and the AIMIM, received support from

the Congress and the CPI (Marxist) even as the BJP opposed the Bill claiming that reservation on the basis of religion was against the constitutional norms.

– The passed bill will now be sent for the President’s assent with a request to include it in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution as was done in the case of Tamil Nadu.

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3) Trial run of India’s first vistadome railway coach was inaugurated on 16 April 2017. This coach has been attached to which train that passes through the picturesque Araku Valley of Andhra Pradesh? –

Visakhapatnam-Kirandul passenger train

Explanation: The Visakhapatnam-Kirandul passenger train became the first train in the country to have a vistadome railway coach as the trial run of this coach was flagged-off by Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu through video conference at the Visakhapatnam Railway Station on 16 April 2017.

– The most unique feature of Vistadome coach is that it has transparent glasses installed on its roof that offer a breathtaking view of the hills and valleys to the tourists that visit Araku Valley in Andhra Pradesh.

– Other features of this state-of-the-art coach are LED lights, rotatable seats and GPS based info system, etc.

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4) Robert Taylor, who passed away during April 2017, was a noted pioneer in which field? – **Computer Science**

Explanation: As a computer scientist Robert Taylor played vital roles in creating the internet, personal computer and the mouse, apart from numerous other innovations.

– Taylor was the creator of Arpanet, a single computer network to link with the others that would evolve into what we now know as the internet. He had correctly predicted the network would one day become an efficient and necessary utility for the public.

– Taylor’s team also developed the networking technology Ethernet and a what-you-see-is-what-you-get (WYSIWYG) word processing program called Bravo that would become the basis for Microsoft Word. He also played a key role in the creation of the computer mouse.

– He passed away at the age of 85 at his home in Woodside, California on 13 April 2017.

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5) Approximately how many persons have been identified under the second phase of the “Operation Clean Money” which was launched on 14 April 2017 with an aim to detect black money generation post demonetization? – **60,000**

Explanation: More than 60,000 persons, including 1,300 high risk persons, have been identified for investigation into claims of excessive cash sales during the demonetisation period. They will be investigated under Operation Clean Money II, which was launched on 14 April 2017.

– As part of the first phase of the ‘Operation Clean Money’, launched on 31 January 2017, the Income Tax Department had sent online queries and investigated 17.92 lakh persons out of which 9.46 lakh persons have responded to the department.

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6) What is the official name of one of the most powerful bomb that was dropped on Afghanistan by the United States on 13 April 2017? – **GBU-43**

Explanation: GBU-43 is the official name of the massive bomb that was dropped on 13 April 2017 by the United States on Afghanistan as it targeted a series of caves used by Islamic State militants in the country's Nangarhar province. At least 36 persons were killed in the attack. It is one of the largest non-nuclear bombs ever used in the battlefield.

– GBU-43 is also known by another name – 'Massive Ordnance Air Blast bomb (MOAB)' while the media nicknamed it as 'Mother of All Bombs'. It weighs 9,797 kgs and is about 20 feet long. It is capable of burrowing through 200 feet of earth and 60 feet of concrete before detonating.

– This bomb was first tested in March 2003 at the time of US led invasion of Iraq. The test resulted in a huge mushroom cloud that could be seen as far away from 32 km. It has been developed by Albert L Weimorts, Jr. of Air Force Research Laboratory.

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7) Which Indian badminton player won the men's singles title of Singapore Open super series tournament on 16 April 2017? – **B. Sai Praneeth**

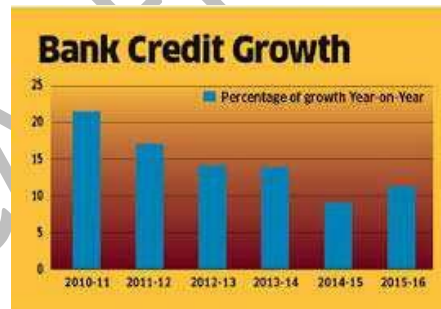
Explanation: India's B. Sai Praneeth defeated the more fancied fellow Indian Kidambi Srikanth in the men's singles final of Singapore Open super series badminton tournament to clinch his maiden superseries title on 16 April 2017.

– Sai Praneeth defeated Srikanth by 17-21, 21-17, 21-12 as he made a brilliant comeback after losing the first game in a historic all-Indian final.

– On the other hand women's singles title was won by world no.1 Tai Tzu Ying of Chinese Taipei as she defeated Olympic champion Carolina Marin of Spain by 21-15, 21-15. This was the fifth consecutive Super Series title for Ying.

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19 April 2017



1) The growth in bank credit during 2016-17 stood at 5.1%, as was disclosed in the data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) during April 2017. What is an important fact associated with this data? – **This is the slowest in bank credit in over 60 years**

Explanation: According to data released by the RBI on 14 April 2017, outstanding bank credit as on 31 March 2017 stood at Rs 78.82 lakh crore. Thus the growth for the whole year was 5.1% as against 10.3% last year (2015-16). The last time loans grew slower than this was in 1953-54 when bank credit growth had slowed down to 1.7%.

– Other than bad loans and corporate investment coming to a standstill, bank credit growth was also constrained by demonetisation. Besides bad loans, one of the biggest concerns for the RBI is managing the surplus liquidity with banks. While on the one hand banks are seeing lower credit growth, on

the other their deposits continue to remain high, again mainly due to demonetisation.

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2) State Bank of India (SBI) on 18 April 2017 achieved which major distinction from the perspective of market capitalization? – It became the most valued PSU by market capitalization

Explanation: State Bank of India (SBI), that gained 2% to reach Rs. 296 levels on 18 April 2017, became the most valued PSU by market capitalisation (m-cap). Thus far in the calendar year 2017 (CY17), SBI has outperformed the market with over 18% rise, as against 11.5% gain in the benchmark index.

– Shares of public sector banks (PSBs) were in focus on the day with the Nifty PSU Bank index hitting 52-week high on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) in intra-day trade.

– The rally in bank stocks has largely been fuelled by the recent Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) action plan on Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) and an improvement in operational and financial performance over the next few quarters.



3) What is the name of the visa programme used by over 95,000

temporary foreign workers (majority of them Indians), that was abolished by the Australian Government on 18 April 2017? – **“Visa 457”**

Explanation: ‘Visa 457’ is the name of the Australian visa programme that allowed businesses to employ foreign workers for a period up to four years in skilled jobs where there is a shortage of Australian workers.

– This visa programme was extremely popular amongst Indian workers as the majority of the visa holders were from India followed by the UK and China.

– Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on 18 April 2017 announced the decision to abolish ‘Visa 457’ programme as he said Australian workers must have priority for Australian jobs. The programme will be replaced by another visa programme, with new restrictions.

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4) What is India’s place in the 4th edition of Huawei Global Connectivity Index (GCI) that was released on 18 April 2017? – 43rd

Explanation: India gained one place to get 43rd spot in the Huawei Global Connectivity Index (GCI) for 2017. This was the fourth edition of the annual GCI study that shows how countries are progressing with digital transformation based on 40 unique indicators that cover five technology enablers: broadband, data centers, cloud, big data and Internet of Things.

– US topped the list with Singapore and Sweden a close second and third. India performs well on the key indicators of a knowledge economy but falls behind in its broadband assessments – giving it an overall rank of 43.

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5) On 18 April 2017 who became the first-ever batsman in the world to reach 10,000 runs mark in Twenty20 (T20) cricket? – Chris Gayle



Explanation: Chris Gayle of West Indies became the first entrant to the T20 10,000 run club while batting in the IPL league match for his team Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) against Gujarat Lions in Rajkot on 18 April 2017. He scored a belligerent 77 off 38 balls to end with 10,074 runs.

– Before the match he has 9,997 runs in T20 games. The hard-hitting West Indian already holds a host of records in the T20 format.

20-21 April 2017

1) Chinese Government during April 2017 announced which decision pertaining to Arunachal Pradesh with far-reaching implications on Sino-Indian relations? – **China for the first time announced “standardised” official names for six places in Arunachal Pradesh**

Explanation: Upping the ante against India, China on 14 April 2017 for the first time announced ‘standardised’ official names for six places in Arunachal Pradesh, days after it lodged strong protests with India over the Dalai Lama’s visit to the frontier state.

– China’s Ministry of Civil Affairs announced that it had standardised in Chinese characters, Tibetan and Roman alphabet the names of six places in Arunachal Pradesh, which it calls ‘South Tibet’. China’s state media said the move was aimed at reaffirming China’s claim over the state.

– The official names of the six places using the Roman alphabet are Wo’gyainling, Mila Ri, Qoidêngarbo Ri, Mainquka, Bümo La and Namkapub Ri.

– The India-China border dispute covers the 3,488 km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC). While China claims Arunachal Pradesh as South Tibet, India asserts that the dispute covers Aksai Chin area which was illegally occupied by China during the 1962 war.

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2) The Union cabinet on 19 April 2017 decided to put an end to the practice of using red beacons atop vehicles in the country. Under it, all government vehicles, including those ferrying the President, Prime minister, Chief Ministers, central and state ministers, judges of the Supreme Court and high courts or any other VIP, will be barred from using them. This decision comes into force from which date? – **1 May 2017**

Explanation: At present, red beacons are installed in vehicles of dignitaries specified

by Central and State governments. Now, from 1 May 2017 neither state nor central government can nominate any official to use one.

– The government also decided to make amendments to the rules governing the use of blue beacons and said they can only be used by vehicles like ambulances, fire tenders and police cars, but only in cases of emergency as notified by the government.

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3) What is the decided interest on provident fund deposits for 2016-17 for EPFO subscribers? – **8.65%**

Explanation: It is worth mentioning that the trustees of the Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) had in December 2016 decided to keep the interest rate for year 2016-17 at 8.65%. But there were reports in some section of media that the Finance Ministry is nudging the Labour Ministry to lower the interest rate by up to 50 basis points.

– Union Labour Minister Bandaru Dattatreya on 20 April 2017 made it clear that the Ministry has ratified EPFO trustees’ decision and no change in it will be undertaken. He said that the Ministry will still pocket Rs. 158 crore on providing interest rate of 8.65%.

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4) Union Government during April 2017 extended the ceasefire agreement with two insurgent groups in Nagaland for how much duration? – **One year**

Explanation: The ceasefire agreement was signed between the Union Government and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Reformation) and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Neokpao- Khitovi). It was slated to expire on 28 April 2017.

– The Union Government on 18 April 2017 extended the agreement for one more year from 28 April. The agreement was signed on 3 August 2015.

– The two insurgent groups, which operate in Nagaland, are among several other armed groups of the state such as NSCN (Isak-Muivah) and NSCN (Khaplang).

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5) Which electronic sports will be featured as a full sport at the 2022 Asian Games, as was announced by the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) on 19 April 2017? – **Video Gaming**

Explanation: The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) on 19 April 2017 announced that it will introduce e-sports (video gaming) to the official program of the Asian Games at Hangzhou, China. It will also be a demonstration sport at the 2018 Asian Games in Palembang, Indonesia.

– The council is collaborating with Ali sports, a unit of China's Alibaba Group, to bring e-sports to the games. However, no details were given on which particular video games would be included in the Games.

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22-24 April 2017

1) Which edition of NITI Aayog's Governing Council was held on 23 April 2017 in which a precursor of the ambitious '15-year Vision Document' to accelerate the country's economic development was presented? –

Third

Explanation: The third meeting of NITI Aayog's Governing Council was held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan on 23 April 2017. The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The meeting was attended by Chief Ministers of all states except West Bengal and Delhi.

– In the meeting, NITI Aayog's Vice-Chairman, Arvind Panagariya, presented a roadmap for "rapid transformation" of India by outlining key aspects of the document, comprising a seven-year strategy paper and a three-year action plan.

– At the Council's first meeting on 8 February 2015, the Prime Minister had laid down the key mandates of NITI Aayog such as fostering cooperative federalism by addressing national issues through mutual cooperation and monitoring of important schemes and programs.

– The second meeting of the Council was held on 15 July 2015, which had reviewed the progress made by the three sub-groups of chief ministers and the two task forces.

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2) The first PSU disinvestment of fiscal year 2017-18 took place in which PSU during April 2017? – **National Aluminium Company Ltd (Nalco)**

Explanation: National Aluminium Company Ltd (NALCO) became the first public sector undertaking (PSU) to be divested by the Union Govt. in the current fiscal (2017-18) as the govt. raised over Rs.1,200 crore through the sale of 9.2% stake in it. Both retail and institutional investors lapped up the shares offered to them.

– The government has set a target of Rs. 46,500 crore through minority stake sale and Rs.15,000 crore from strategic disinvestment in 2017-18. In 2016-17, the government had raised over Rs. 46,247 crore from disinvestment.

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3) The Supreme Court in its ruling of April 2017 described what amount as a 'just and proper' amount as alimony, for maintenance to be paid by a husband to his estranged wife? – **25% of the net salary**

Explanation: In an important order, the Supreme Court set a benchmark for maintenance to be paid by a husband to his estranged wife, stating that 25% of his net salary might constitute a 'just and proper' amount as alimony.

– A bench of Justices R. Banumathi and M. M. Santanagoudar made the observation while directing a resident of West Bengal's Hoogly, earning Rs. 95,527 a month, to set

aside Rs. 20,000 as maintenance for his former wife and their son, turning down the man's plea that the amount was excessive.

– Its order came on the man's plea challenging a Calcutta high court order directing him to pay her Rs. 23,000 per month. Though the apex court said there was nothing amiss in the high court order, it reduced the amount by Rs. 3,000 on the ground that the man had remarried and hence needed to provide for his new family.

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4) Six Madhesi parties of Nepal on 20 April 2017 merged to form which single political entity to fight jointly in the upcoming local elections on 14 May 2017? – **“Rashtirya Janata Party”**

Explanation: ‘Rastirya Janata Party’ (RJP) is the name of the new united political entity formed by 6 Madhesi parties of Nepal. These six parties are

– Tarai Madhes Loktantrik Party, Sadbhawana Party, Rastriya Madhes Samajbadi Party, Tarai Madhes Sadbhawana Party, Madhesi Janadhikar Forum-Ganatantrik and Nepal Sadbhawana Party.

– The Madhesi parties, who claim to represent the interests of inhabitants of the southern Terai region who are mostly of Indian origin, have been demanding that the Constitution promulgated in 2015 be amended to revise the provisions of citizenship and re-demarcation of the provincial boundary before going to these elections.

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25 April 2017

1) In one of the deadliest attacks on security forces, Maoists killed 25 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel and injured seven in Chhattisgarh on 24 April 2017. This attack took place in which Maoist-infested district of the state? – **Sukma**

Explanation: The attack took place on 24 April 2017, when a team of around 100 men, belonging to the 74th battalion of the CRPF, based at the Burkapal camp on the Dornapal-Jagargunda road in south of Sukma district, was out to provide protection for road construction work in the area.

– Over 300 Maoists attacked the CRPF men just after noon. They were carrying automatic weapons such as AK-47, SLR, and INSAS. While many jawans died on the spot a few succumbed to their injuries later. CRPF personnel involved in the attack claimed to have killed 10 to 12 Maoists.

– This is the second Maoist attack in the last 50 days in Sukma district. Twelve CRPF men were killed in March 2017 near Bhejji village.

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2) Which three African countries have been chosen to test the world's first malaria vaccine, as announced by the WHO on 24 April 2017? – **Ghana, Kenya and Malawi**

Explanation: Ghana, Kenya and Malawi will begin piloting the first-ever project for injectable Malaria vaccine that will start from next year (2018). This announcement was made by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 24 April 2017.

– The vaccine, which has partial effectiveness, has the potential to save tens of thousands of lives if used with existing measures.

– These three countries (Ghana, Kenya and Malawi) were chosen for the vaccine pilot because all have strong prevention and vaccination programs but continue to have high numbers of malaria cases.

- The malaria vaccine has been developed by pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline, and the \$49 million for the first phase of the pilot is being funded by the global vaccine alliance GAVI, UNITAID and Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.
- Malaria remains one of the world's most stubborn health challenges, infecting more than 200 million people every year and killing about half a million, most of them children in Africa.

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3) According to the data released by Oil Ministry's Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell (PPAC), India has replaced which country as the world's second-largest importer of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)? – **Japan**

Explanation: PPAC's data has disclosed that India's import of LPG soared 23% during the financial year that ended 31 March 2017 to 11 million tonnes while that of Japan slipped 3.2% during the same period to 10.6 million tonnes. India thus toppled Japan to become world's second largest LPG importer. China remains the world's top importer.

- This increase in LPG imports is primarily due to Narendra Modi government's push to provide cooking gas cylinders to the poor and wean them off polluting fuels. The government in May 2016 embarked on a drive to provide free cooking gas connections to women from extremely poor households, aimed at reducing the use of polluting fuels such as wood and dried cow dung.
- LPG in India is still primarily used as a cooking fuel. Japan on the other hand is cutting back on LPG as cooking fuel and is moving to cheaper alternatives such as natural gas.



4) Who social activist became the sixth Indian to be bestowed with the Goldman Environmental Prize, as was announced on 23 April 2017? – **Prafulla Samantra**

Explanation: Prafulla Samantra was named as one of the six winners of the Goldman Environmental Prize for 2017, as announced in San Francisco on 23 April 2017.

- Samantra was one of the key leaders responsible for rallying tribes, indigenous to Orissa's Niyamgiri region, and using legal provisions to thwart mining-to-metals conglomerate, Vedanta. The company has been forced to suspend plans to mine bauxite.
- He led a 12-year long legal battle that affirmed the indigenous Dongria Kondh's land rights and protected the Niyamgiri Hills from a massive, open-pit aluminum ore mine.
- Since 1990 when the awards were first instituted, five Indians – Medha Patkar, M.C. Mehta, Rasheeda Bi, Champaran Shukla and Ramesh Agrawal – have won the prize. Samantra will be the sixth to win the prestigious prize.
- This prize awarded annually to grassroots environmental activists, one from each of the world's six geographic regions and is often called 'Green Nobel'.

26 April 2017



Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

1) French voters on 23 April 2017 chose which candidates to go to a runoff election to determine country's next president? – **Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen**

Explanation: Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen will fight it out in France's most consequential election in recent history as they made it to the final elections.

- The first round of election was held on 23 April 2017 in which Emmanuel Macron of En Marche! (24.01% votes) and Marine Le Pen of National Front (21.30% votes) emerged ahead of other leaders. As no candidate won

a majority, a run-off election between the top two candidates (Macron) and Le Pen will be held on 7 May 2017.

– It is the first time in the nearly 59-year history of France’s Fifth Republic that both of the final candidates are from outside the traditional left-right party structure.

– Macron, a former investment banker, abandoned traditional parties a year ago to form his own movement. On the other hand Le Pen had campaigned stridently against Muslims and her success was a victory for people who oppose the European Union.

– The result was a rebuke of France’s traditional mainstream parties and thus setting the country on an uncertain path in an election that could also decide the future of the European Union.

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2) Who will be conferred with the Dada Saheb Phalke Award for 2016, as was

announced by the Information & Broadcasting Ministry on 24 April 2017? – **K. Vishwanath**

Explanation: 87-year old renowned director Kasinadhuni Viswanath was on 24 April 2017 named for the prestigious Dada Saheb Phalke award for outstanding contribution to the film industry. He is a celebrated filmmaker in Telugu film industry but has also been active in Tamil and Hindi cinema.

– He is known for making films on content-driven stories that have revolved around social themes like disability, untouchability and the evils of dowry.

– He becomes the 48th recipient of the award, the highest recognition in Indian cinema, which consists of a golden lotus, a cash prize of Rs. 10 lakhs and a shawl.

– The recipient of five National Film Awards, Viswanath is known for his movies — “Sankarabharanam”, “Sagara Sangamam” (starring Kamal Haasan and Jayaprada), “Swati Mutyam”, “Saptapadi”,

“Kaamchor”, “Sanjog” and “Jaag Utha Insaan” among others.

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3) Which entity will conduct the National Eligibility Test (NET), as was confirmed by University Grants Commission (UGC) on 25 April 2017? – **CBSE**

Explanation: Ending confusion for nearly 5 lakh students, the University Grants Commission (UGC) on 25 April 2017 said it has convinced the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to conduct National Eligibility Test (NET) – the entrance test based on which college and university teachers are recruited.

– For the first time in 33 years, the NET was facing uncertainty after CBSE had written to the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry earlier this year expressing its inability to conduct the exam.

– In the absence of any national testing body, CBSE conducts major higher education related entrances apart from school leaving exams at Class 10 and Class 12 level for CBSE affiliated schools. It also conducts the Joint Entrance Exam-main (JEE Main) for engineering schools including Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).

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4) India’s first and longest sea ropeway will be built between which places, as announced on 24 April 2017? – **Mumbai and Elephanta Island**

Explanation: India’s first and longest ropeway to connect Mumbai with the famous Elephanta Island in the Arabian Sea is planned to be constructed by the Mumbai Port Trust (MPT). This was announced on 24 April 2017.

– The 8-km ropeway will begin from Sewri in Mumbai’s east coast and end at Raigad

district's Elephanta Island, globally renowned for Elephanta Caves, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

– The approximately 40-minute ride by a 20-seater cable car, with a transit station midway will prove to be a major boost to tourism.



5) What is the name of the NASA woman astronaut who on 24 April 2017 broke the record for cumulative time spent in space by a U.S. astronaut? – **Peggy Whitson**

Explanation: Peggy Whitson on 24 April 2017 broke the record for most days spent in space (cumulatively) by a US astronaut. She broke the previous record set by Jeff Williams who had spent a total of 534 days in space.

– Whitson has been currently living and working aboard the International Space Station (ISS), for which she was launched in November 2016 using a Russian Soyuz capsule. At the time of her launch, she had already accumulated 377 total days in space.

– Her mission was recently extended for an additional three months. Now when she will return from ISS in September 2017, she would have accumulated more than 600 days in space.

27 April 2017



1) The benchmark Sensex index of BSE achieved which landmark on 26 April 2017? –

It closed over 30,000 points for the first time ever

Explanation: Driven by an upbeat sentiment in the global markets, BSE's benchmark

Sensex index crossed the 30,000 mark 26 April 2017. This was the third time that Sensex crossed this mark.

– However, this was the first time that Sensex closed at over 30,000 points. In the morning at 10:37 am, BSE's 30-share Sensex rose 0.56% or 168.58 points higher at 30,111.82 points. The index ended on 30,133.35 points, the first-ever above 30k closing for it.

– The Sensex has breached the 30,000 mark two times earlier – first time in March 2015 and for the second time on 5 April 2017.

– On the other hand NSE's Nifty ended the day on 9,351.85 points, its highest-ever closing.

– The main reason for this rally was an upbeat sentiment in the global markets, on the back of robust US corporate earnings and a centrist victory in the first round of the French presidential election.



2) What is the name of the spacecraft of U.S. space agency NASA that completed its final flyby of Saturn's moon Titan

on 26 April 2017 before starting its plunge into the planet? – **Cassini**

Explanation: Cassini is the name of an unmanned spacecraft sent to the planet Saturn by NASA. It was part of the Cassini-Huygens joint mission that was launched from Earth on 15 October 1997 through Titan IVB/Centaur. It entered Saturn's orbit on 1 July 2004.

– While Huygens separated from the orbiter and landed on Saturn's moon Titan on 14 January 2005, Cassini continued its probe of Saturn. However, since 30 November 2016, due to the spacecraft's dwindling fuel resources for further orbital corrections, Cassini entered the final phase of the project.

– Cassini completed its last close flyby of Saturn's hazy moon Titan during

April 2017 and began a series of 22 dives between Saturn and its rings on 26 April 2017 before it plunges into the ringed planet to bring an end to its 20-year-long journey.

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3) Fori Nehru, who passed away on 25 April 2017, was the oldest living member of the Nehru family. She was married to Jawaharlal Nehru's cousin B.K.

Nehru. What was her original nationality? – **Hungarian**

Explanation: 109-year old Fori Nehru was a Hungarian by birth and was known as Magdolna Friedman before she married Jawaharlal Nehru's cousin B.K. Nehru in 1935. B.K. Nehru was Indian Ambassador to the United States.

– She was the founder of the Cottage Industries Emporium. In the aftermath of the Partition, Fori joined the Emergency Committee for refugees, and started a massive employment campaign for refugee women in 1947, which later evolved into the Cottage Industries Emporium.

– She passed away at her home in Kasauli in Himachal Pradesh on 25 April 2017.

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4) During April 2017 a ban on religious names for Muslim babies was imposed in which region of China? – **Xinjiang**

Explanation: Officials in the western region of Xinjiang during April 2017 released a list of banned baby names amid an ongoing crackdown on Muslim religion. This province is home to roughly half of China's 23 million Muslims and to the Uighur minority.

– According to media reports, names such as Islam, Quran, Saddam and Mecca, as well as references to the star and crescent moon symbol, are all unacceptable to the ruling Communist party. Children with those names will be denied household registration, a

crucial document that grants access to social services, healthcare and education.

– It is worth mentioning that Xinjiang is one of the most militarised regions in the country. Hence young men are banned from growing beards and women are forbidden from wearing face veils in the province.

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5) Who was appointed the new Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) on 26 April 2017? – **Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar**

Explanation: Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar, a 1983-batch officer of the Indian Police Service (IPS), was on 26 April 2017 appointed new Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), country's largest paramilitary force. The appointment came two days after the CRPF lost 25 jawans in the deadly Sukma attack.

– Bhatnagar currently serves as the Director General of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). He replaces acting DG Sudeep Lakhtakia.

– On the other hand, R K Pachnanda was appointed as the new Director General of the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP). He will assume charge from Krishna Chaudhary, who is set to retire in June 2017. Pachnanda is currently serving as DG of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

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6) The Nasdaq Composite Index hit which major milestone on 25 April 2017? – **It surpassed the 6,000 point mark for the first time**

Explanation: U.S. stock index Nasdaq Composite Index touched an intraday record of 6,036.02 on 25 April 2017 and in the process successfully breaching the 6,000 point mark for the first time.

– Overall, it has taken the Nasdaq 46 years since its inception in 1971 to hit 6,000. It is worth mentioning that Nasdaq has been laden with tech companies and the tech industry has performed incredibly well off-late.

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28 April 2017

1) The first-ever flight under Union Government's ambitious UDAN regional connectivity scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 27 April 2017 between which cities? – **Shimla and New Delhi**

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the first flight under UDAN regional connectivity scheme between Himachal Pradesh's capital Shimla and New Delhi on 27 April 2017. This flight will allow tourists to fly to Shimla from New Delhi for just Rs. 2,000.

– Air India subsidiary Alliance Air will operate the Delhi-Shimla flight. The Shimla Airport (at Jubbarhatti) had been shut for scheduled flights since 6 September 2012, affecting tourists and business travellers to the state.

– UDAN scheme stands for "Ude Desh ka Har Nagarik" and it aims to build efficient regional air connectivity across the country. The seating capacity of airlines under the UDAN scheme will range from 19 to 78 and 50% of the seats in every flight will have a fare cap of Rs 2,500 per seat per hour. 5 airline companies have been chosen for the scheme Airline Allied Services (Alliance Air), SpiceJet, Turbo Megha Airways, Air Deccan and Air Odisha.

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2) The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) during April 2017 came up with which important guideline regarding EPF subscribers? – **It has done away with the requirement of EPF subscribers to get their employer's approval or submit doctor certificates to withdraw provident fund savings for medical purposes**

Explanation: Till now EPF subscribers were required to produce a certificate from the employer stating that the Employees' State Insurance Scheme facility is not provided to them along with a doctor's certificate of serious illness.

– Now these subscribers can withdraw their provident fund savings to pay hospital bills in case of serious illness by submitting a self-declared form to the EPFO. The move is in line with the government's policy of moving towards a self-declaration regime.

– Employees with EPF accounts are allowed to withdraw provident fund savings up to six months' salary in cases of hospitalisation for at least a month, major surgical operation or in case they are suffering from tuberculosis, leprosy, paralysis, cancer and heart ailments.

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3) Vinod Khanna, the immensely popular Hindi film actor of yesteryears, passed away at a hospital in Mumbai on 27 April 2017. As a Bollywood heartthrob he was best known for his roles in films such as "Amar Akbar Anthony", "Qurbaani" and "Insaaf". He was a 4-time Lok Sabha Member of Parliament from which constituency of Punjab? – **Gurdaspur**

Explanation: Vinod Khanna was the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) member of the Lok Sabha from Gurdaspur in Punjab. He was into his fourth term as MP from the seat.

– Feted as one of the most handsome actors of the Hindi film industry, Khanna made his acting debut in 1968 with "Man Ka Meet". In many of the earlier films, Khanna played a negative or a supporting role. A much sought after actor in the 1970s and 1980s, he acted in several blockbusters, including "Mera Gaon Mera Desh", "Reshma Aur Shera", "Elan", "Insaaf" and "Dayavan".

– At the height of his popularity, Khanna surprised his fans when he took a break from acting for five years to join Osho Rajneesh at his Oregon ashram in the U.S. in 1982.

– But he returned to cinema in the late eighties, and courted success again with films such as "Insaaf" and "Satyameva Jayate".

– He was last seen in the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer "Dilwale" in 2015. He was 70.

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4) What is the name of the Director of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A) who resigned from his post ahead of tenure on 26 April 2017? – **Ashish Nanda**

Explanation: According to the information disclosed by IIM, Ahmedabad on 27 April 2017, Director Ashish Nanda has tendered his resignation citing personal reasons.

– Nanda, a former professor at Harvard Law School, was the first professor from a foreign school to head an IIM. He will retire from his post on 1 September 2017.

– His resignation came as a surprise as he is leaving the institute one year before his tenure expires. He was appointed for a period of five years, and when he relinquishes office (1 Sept), he will be completing four years.

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5) Which vehicle will replace the old war-horse Maruti Suzuki Gypsy in the Defence forces, as was approved by the Ministry of Defence recently? – **Tata Safari Storme**

Explanation: Indian carmaker, Tata Motors has signed a contract with the Indian Army for supplying 3,192 Safari Storme cars under a new category, GS800 or General Service 800. Storme will thus replace the old war-horse – Maruti Suzuki Gypsy. Over 35,000 Gypsies are due for replacement in the coming years.

– The Ministry of Defence had floated a price request for vehicles with three basic criteria—minimum payload capacity of 800 kilograms, hard roofs and air-conditioning. The cars that were considered under this proposal were the Tata Safari Storme and the Mahindra Scorpio, both with all-wheel-drive capabilities.

– After the approval of this contract, Tata Motors has become the leading supplier of defence vehicles to the Indian Armed Forces.